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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Agreed conclusions 1996/1 adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its 1996 coordination segment on coordination of the United Nations system of activities for poverty eradication

Note by the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present document highlights the paragraphs and aspects of the agreed conclusions, adopted by the Economic and Social Council at the coordination segment of its substantive session of 1996, on the coordination of United Nations system activities for poverty eradication, that are addressed directly to the Commission on Population and Development, or that have a direct impact on the Commission's work. This document highlights relevant activities planned or undertaken by the Commission.

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* E/CN.9/1997/1.

1. The Economic and Social Council, at its 1996 coordination segment, adopted agreed conclusions 1996/1 on the coordination of United Nations system activities for poverty eradication.[1] In a letter dated 4 September 1996, the President of the Council conveyed these agreed conclusions to the Chairman of the Commission on Population and Development with a view to drawing the attention of the Commission to the conclusions so that the Commission, in its future work, might take into account the guidance given by the Council.

2. The President, in his letter, noted in particular a number of steps taken by the Council to harmonize the intergovernmental consideration of poverty eradication and to ensure that the different dimensions of poverty were covered in a complementary way by its functional commissions and by the Council itself, also taking into account other forums in particular policy-making organs of the specialized agencies. He noted that the Council had concluded that its functional commissions should focus on the linkages between their field of competence and poverty eradication.

3. A number of paragraphs of the Council's agreed conclusions address the role of the Commission on Population and Development in the area of poverty eradication. The Secretary-General is requested to submit a report to the Council at its substantive session of 1997 on the implementation of the agreed conclusions. Any action taken by the Commission to implement the agreed conclusions would be included in that report.

4. In order to facilitate any action the Commission may wish to take to inform the Council of its activities to implement the Council's agreed conclusions 1996/1 on poverty eradication, the present note highlights those paragraphs and aspects of the agreed conclusions that are addressed directly to the Commission on Population and Development, or that have a direct impact on the Commission's work. They are followed by comments that describe relevant activities planned or undertaken by the Commission. The Commission may wish to consider these comments with a view to informing the Council of its activities in the framework of the agreed conclusions.

EXCERPTS FROM ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL AGREED CONCLUSIONS 1996/1 ON POVERTY ERADICATION

Paragraph 37: "The Council will carry out an overall review of the theme of poverty eradication at a date to be determined as a contribution to the review of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. In accordance with their programmes of work as approved by the Council, the relevant functional commissions should, in 1999-2000, prepare technical and focused inputs for the Council's overall review of poverty eradication."

Paragraph 42: "The Commission on Sustainable Development should focus its work related to poverty in accordance with paragraph 6 of its decision 4/2 on combating poverty.[2] The Commission on Sustainable Development should rely on inputs from the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Population and Development, as necessary, in order to enhance the implementation of those recommendations

of chapter 3 (Combating poverty) of Agenda 21[3] that correspond to core areas of the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the International Conference on Population and Development, respectively."

Paragraph 46: "The Commission on Population and Development should address issues relating to poverty and population in the context of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development."

Paragraph 53: "The Commission for Social Development will examine the theme of 'Social services for all' in 1999 in the context of its multi-year programme of work with particular focus on education. This examination could also serve as an input into the overall review of the International Conference on Population and Development in 1999. The Commission on Population and Development will not need to conduct a separate discussion of education but should continue to examine education and awareness programmes targeted at population objectives."

Paragraph 54: "... Also, the Commission for Social Development could draw upon the work of the Commission on Population and Development on access to health care, including reproductive health care, ..."

5. Within the context of the role of the Economic and Social Council in overall guidance and coordination, the Commission on Population and Development has primary responsibility for reviewing the follow-up and implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[4] reporting through the Council to the General Assembly, in accordance with Assembly resolution 49/128.

6. The Programme of Action reflects many of the concepts and issues that have emerged in the development dialogue during the past decade. First and foremost is the concept of sustainable development and the closely linked concept of poverty eradication. References to poverty and its eradication are interspersed throughout the Programme. The Commission on Population and Development at its twenty-eighth session, held in New York in February-March 1995, included in its topic-oriented and prioritized multi-year work programme the preparation of annual reports on a special set of themes of the Programme of Action. Consequently, the following thematic calendar was decided upon by the Commission:[5]

(a) 1996: Reproductive rights and reproductive health, including population information, education and communication;

(b) 1997: International migration, with special emphasis on the linkages between migration and development, and on gender issues and the family;

(c) 1998: Health and mortality, with special emphasis on the linkages between health and development, and on gender and age;

(d) 1999: Population growth, structure and distribution, with special emphasis on sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

7. Regarding paragraph 37 of the agreed conclusions, the Commission on Population and Development annually considers the report World Population Monitoring which provides an in-depth technical consideration of the aforementioned annual set of themes. The Commission on Population and Development is scheduled to review, at its thirty-first session in 1998, a report on health and mortality, with special emphasis on the linkages between health and development, and on gender and age. It is expected that this report will follow the structure of the Programme of Action and include a discussion of infant mortality and life expectancy, two indicators that have been shown to be closely associated with poverty. In 1999, the Commission will have under consideration a report on population growth, structure and distribution, with special emphasis on sustained economic growth and sustainable development, including "population, sustained economic growth and poverty" as these are dealt with in chapter III of the Programme of Action. Also in 1999, the Commission will undertake a quinquennial review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action and in implementing its recommendations, and will report its findings to the Council. These reports can provide technical and focused inputs to the Council's overall review of poverty eradication at a date to be determined by the Council.

8. Regarding paragraphs 42 and 46, the area of focus of the Commission on Population and Development in 1999 will include "population, sustained economic growth and poverty", as these topics are dealt with in the Programme of Action. Given that the Commission on Sustainable Development meets after the Commission on Population and Development in each calendar year, the results of the deliberations of the Commission on Population and Development in this area will be available to the Commission on Sustainable Development in 1999.

9. As regards paragraphs 53 and 54, the Commission on Population and Development meets in February of each year, while the Commission for Social Development generally meets in March. Therefore, the conclusions and recommendations of the Commission for Social Development, under the theme of social services for all, which it will examine at its 1999 session, will not be available to the Commission on Population and Development at its session in 1999. These may, however, provide an input into the work of the Commission on Population and Development during its session in 2000. It should be noted that the Economic and Social Council, in paragraph 53, decided that the Commission on Population and Development would not need to conduct a separate discussion of education, but should only continue to examine education and awareness programmes targeted at population objectives.

10. Also with respect to paragraph 53, the ACC Task Force on Basic Social Services for All provides an annual report to the Commission on Population and Development. The report for 1997 (E/CN.9/1997/4), for 1998 and for 1999 may be useful to the Commission for Social Development when it focuses on basic social services at its session in 1999.

11. In addition to its responsibilities for follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development, the Commission on Population and Development also reviews the progress achieved by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat in implementing its programme of work in the field of population. In this regard,

the Commission on Population and Development will examine reports based on World Population Prospects: The 1996 Revision at its session in 1997 and on World Population Prospects: The 1998 Revision at its 1999 session. These reports are particularly relevant to the monitoring of Conference goals in the area of health and mortality. Furthermore, the complementary reports, World Urbanization Prospects: The 1996 Revision and World Urbanization Prospects: The 1998 Revision, will contain information concerning trends in the growth of rural and urban areas, which is of interest to the functional commissions that consider poverty eradication in urban and rural contexts.

Notes

[1] See A/51/3 (Part I), chap. III, sect. A, para. 2.

[2] See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 8 (E/1996/28), chap. I, sect. C, decision 4/2.

[3] Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992, vol. I, Resolutions Adopted by the Conference (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex II.

[4] Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1995, Supplement No. 7 (E/1995/27), annex I, sect. III.